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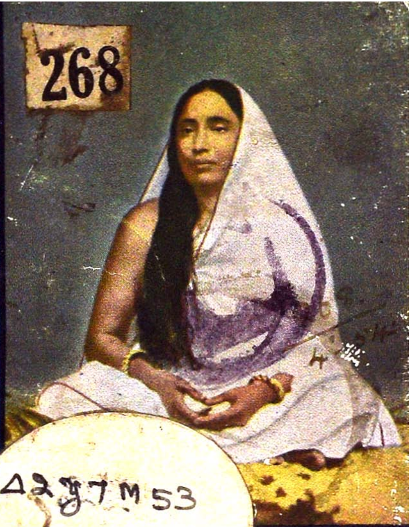

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THUS SPAKE - - - THE HOLY MOTHER

Compiled by

SWAMI SUDDHASATWANANDA

SRI RAMAKRISHNA MATH
MYLAPORE, MADRAS-4
1953

PUBLISHED BY
THE PRESIDENT,
SRI RAMAKRISHNA MATH,
MYLAPORE, MADRAS-4.

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139325

PRINTED AT
THE JUPITER PRESS LTD.,
MADRAS-1.

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1st impression, 20,000—Dec., 1953.

PUBLISHER'S NOTE

SINCE the publication of *Thus Spake Sri Ramakrishna* and *Thus Spake Vivekananda* which have undergone 4th and 6th editions respectively within a very short time, we have been requested many a time to compile and publish such a handy and attractive edition of the choicest sayings of The Holy Mother, Sri Saradamani Devi, the divine consort of Sri Ramakrishna. The birthday centenary of The Holy Mother starts from 27th December, 1953 and there can be no better occasion than this to present her inspiring sayings to our readers.

An invocation to the Holy Mother by Swami Abhedananda, a direct disciple of Sri Ramakrishna, a short life and a very nice letter written to her by Sister Nivedita, have been added at the beginning wherein the readers will get a glimpse of the personality of the Holy Mother and an idea of deep love and veneration cherished for her by the devotees.

May we hope that these sayings will illumine and guide many a yearning soul and thereby enable them to attain the highest goal of their lives?

December, 27th
1953.

PUBLISHER

INVOCATION TO THE HOLY MOTHER!

कृपां कुरु महादेवि
सुतेषु प्रणतेषु च ।
चरणाश्रयदानेन
कृपामयि नमोऽस्तु ते ॥
लज्जापटावृते नित्यं
सारदे ज्ञानदायिके ।
पापेभ्यो नः सदा रक्ष
कृपामयि नमोऽस्तु ते ॥

You home of compassion,
supreme Goddess,
Grant the refuge of your feet
and show

Mercy to us, your lowly children
To you salutations !

O Sarada ! the giver of wisdom, ever veiled
In modesty, compassion's home, save us
Always from sins ; salutations to thee !

—ABHEDANANDA

THE HOLY MOTHER

SRI Saradamani Devi, the divine consort of Sri Ramakrishna is known to millions of devotees as The Holy Mother. Born of poor but pious Brahmin parents on the 22nd December, 1853 in an obscure village named Jayrambati in the district of Bankura (West Bengal) and bred in that simple country atmosphere, she was married to Sri Ramakrishna at the early age of six only. Like many other incidents in the life of Sri Ramakrishna, his marriage too was remarkable.

The Holy Mother had the chance of being familiar with Sri Ramakrishna long after her marriage at about 1867. Sri Ramakrishna did not neglect her at all but took her under his tutelage and by degrees lovingly imparted to her a thorough knowledge of human character and taught her how to live in a spirit of complete resignation to God. He literally worshipped her as the Divine Mother and saying that she and the Mother Kali in the temple were one and the same, awakened in her the sense of

motherhood to all creatures. The account of her simple austere life, self-effacement and motherly love to one and all, is really unique and surpasses all examples. Her life was one long stillness of prayer and singleness of devotion. With her overflowing affection, the Holy Mother was an unfailing solace to all the troubled hearts that sought refuge at her feet for eternal peace and liberation from the worries and anxieties of worldly life. Men and women who approached her in season and out of season to be

relieved of the extreme tension of their afflicted souls, became recipients of her immortal blessings and sweet words of love and wisdom which stilled the throbbing pains of their hearts for ever. Her life was a synthetic embodiment of the perfect ideals of *Jnana, Bhakti* and *Karma* which are rarely to be met with such a harmonious blending anywhere else in the world. In her life of artless simplicity, purity, piety and self-dedication, the modern Hindu has discovered the perfection of the ideal of womanhood

held forth by his culture. She was unique in being the devoted wife, perfect *Sannyasini*, affectionate mother and ideal teacher in one. She was indeed Sri Ramakrishna's final word as to the ideal of Indian womanhood. After the passing away of Sri Ramakrishna, it was the Holy Mother, who took upon herself the responsibility of looking after his spiritual children and gradually the great Ramakrishna Order grew up centering round her. The Holy Mother entered into *Mahasamadhi* on 20th July, 1920 at Calcutta.

A LETTER TO THE HOLY MOTHER

Written by Sister Nivedita

CAMBRIDGE MASS.,
Sunday, Dec. 11, 1910.

BELOVED MOTHER,

This morning early, I went to church—to pray for Sara. All the people there were thinking of Mary, the Mother of Jesus, and suddenly I thought of you. Your dear face, and your loving look, and your white *Sari* and your bracelets. It was all there. And it seemed to me that yours

was the presence that was to soothe and bless poor S. Sara's sick-room. And — do you know ? — I thought I had been very foolish to sit in your room, at the evening service to Sri Ramakrishna, trying to meditate. Why did I not understand that it was quite enough to be a little child at your dear feet ? Dear Mother ! You are full of love ! And it is not a flushed and violent love like ours, and like the world's but a gentle peace that brings good to everyone and wishes ill to none. It is a golden radiance, full of

play. What a blessed Sunday that was, a few months ago, when I ran in to you, the last thing before I went on the Ganges, and ran back to you for a moment, as soon as I came back! I felt such a wonderful freedom in the blessing you gave me, and in your welcome home! Dearest Mother — I wish we could send you a wonderful hymn, or a prayer. But somehow even that would seem too loud, too full of noise! Surely you are the most wonderful thing of God — Sri Ramakrishna's own chalice of

His Love for the world — a token left with His children, in these lonely days, and we should be very still and quiet before you—except indeed for a little fun! Surely the "wonderful things of God" are all quiet — stealing unnoticed into our lives — the air and the sunlight and the sweetness of gardens and of the Ganges. These are the silent things that are like you!

Do send to poor S. Sara the mantle of your peace. Isn't your thought, now and then, of

the high calm that neither loves nor hates? Isn't that a sweet benediction that rambles in God, like the dew drop on the lotus-leaf, and touches not the world?

Ever, my darling Mother, your foolish Khooki (baby),

NIVEDITA

Thus Spake The Holy Mother

DIVINE GRACE

Q. WHEN will the grace of God descend on me?

A. There is no such rule that the grace of God will fall on one simply because one is practising austerities. In olden days, the *Rishis* practised austerities for thousands of years

with their feet up and head down and a lighted fire burning under them. Even then only some of them received the grace of God.

* * * *

Q. Mother, I have practised austerities and *Japa* so much, but I have not achieved anything.

A. God is not like fish or vegetables that you can buy Him for a price.

* * * *

Q. Mother, I am coming to you so frequently and I hope I have received your grace, but

I do not feel anything.

A. My child, suppose you are asleep on a bed, and some one removes you with the bed to another place. In that case, will you know immediately on waking that you have come to a new place? Not at all. Only after your drowsiness clears away completely, you will know that you have come to a new place.

* * * *

Q. How does one get the vision of God?

A. It is only through His grace. But one must practise

meditation and *Japa*. That removes impurities of the mind. One must practise spiritual disciplines such as worship and so forth. As one gets the fragrance of a flower by handling it, or as one gets the smell of sandalwood by rubbing it against a stone, in the same way one gets spiritual awakening by constantly thinking of God.

* * * *

Nothing can be achieved without His Grace. We have practised so much *Japa*, we have observed so many spiritual

disciplines, but nothing whatsoever is of much avail. How can anyone get liberation unless *Mahamaya* leaves the path open ? O man, take refuge in God ! Take refuge in Him ! Then alone *Mahamaya* will be gracious and pave the way for liberation.

* * * *

It is only if one takes shelter in God that one is saved.

* * * *

Hearing a disciple's letter full of despair, the Holy Mother said seriously and forcibly : " How is that possible ? Is the name

of the Master a trifle? Those who have come here and are thinking of the Master, will certainly see their Chosen Ideal one day. If they are not able to do so during their lifetime, they will at least have His vision at the moment before their death."

* * * *

Repeat the name of God always from the innermost core of your heart, and in all sincerity take refuge in the Master. Do not bother to know how your mind is reacting to things around. And do not waste time

in calculating and worrying over whether or not you are progressing in the path of spirituality. It is *ahamkara* (vanity) to judge progress for oneself. Have faith in the grace of your Guru and *Ishta*.

* * * *

Be sincere in your practice, words and deeds. You will feel how blessed you are! His blessings are always showered on all creatures on the earth. It is needless to ask for it. Practise meditation sincerely and then you will understand His infinite grace. God wants

sincerity, truthfulness and love. Outward verbal effusions do not touch Him.

* * * *

About God-realisation, the Holy Mother said :

" Do you know, my child, what it is like ? It is just like a candy in the hand of a child. Some people beg the child to part with it. But he does not care to give it to them. Still he easily hands it over to another whom he likes. A man performs severe austerity throughout his whole life to realise God, but he does not

succeed, whereas another man gets his realisation practically without any effort. It depends upon the grace of God. He bestows His grace upon anyone He likes. Grace is the important thing.

* * * *

He who has really prayed to the Lord even once, has nothing to fear. By praying to Him constantly one gets ecstatic love (*Prema-Bhakti*) through His grace. This *Prema*, my child, is the innermost thing of a spiritual life. The *Gopis* of Vrindaban attained it. They

were not aware of anything else in the world excepting Sri Krishna.

* * * *

The *Kundalini* will be gradually awakened. You will realise everything by the repetition of God's name. Even if the mind be not quiet, still you can sit at a place and repeat the holy name a million times. Before the awakening of the *Kundalini*, one hears the *Anahata* sound ; but nothing can be achieved without the grace of the Divine Mother.

* * * *

Everybody says regretfully, 'There is so much misery in this world. We have prayed so much to God but still there is no end of misery.' But misery is only the gift of God. It is the symbol of His compassion.

* * * *

The grace of God is the thing that is needful. One should pray for the grace of God.

* * * *

There is no happiness whatever in human birth. The world is verily filled with misery. Happiness here is only a name. He on whom the

grace of the Master has fallen, alone knows him to be God Himself. And remember, that is the only happiness.

* * * *

You see, it is the nature of water to flow downwards, but the sun's rays lift it up towards the sky ; likewise it is the very nature of mind to go to lower things, to objects of enjoyments, but the grace of God can make the mind go towards higher objects.

* * * *

A child might not give a thing to a person who asked for it a

hundred times, whereas it might give it away to another even at the first request. In the same way the grace of God is not conditioned by anything.

SRI RAMAKRISHNA

REALLY and truly Sri Ramakrishna was God Himself. He assumed this human body to remove the sorrows and sufferings of others. He moved about in disguise, as a king walks through his city. He disappeared the moment he became known.

* * * *

You will gain everything if you but take refuge in the Master. Renunciation alone was his splendour. We take

his name and eat and enjoy because he renounced all.

* * * *

How attached the Master was to truth! He used to say that truth alone is the austerity of the Iron Age (Kali Yuga). One attains to God by sticking to truth.

* * * *

When the Master passed away, I also wanted to go. He appeared before me and said, 'No, you must remain here. There are many things to be done.' He said that he would live for three hundred years in

a subtle body, in the hearts of the devotees.

* * * *

Sri Ramakrishna left me behind to manifest the motherhood of God to the world.

* * * *

Q. Can you call Sri Ramakrishna your father ?

A. Yes ! He is my father, my mother, my brother and my friend. He is my all.

* * * *

If you pray to him constantly before his picture, then he manifests himself through that picture. The place where that

picture is kept becomes a shrine.

* * * *

The easiest and best way of solving the problems of life is to take the name of God, of Sri Ramakrishna, in silence.

* * * *

Rely on Sri Ramakrishna and he will save you from your misery and bestow on you peace of mind. Take the name of the Lord and contemplate the great sufferings, Sri Ramakrishna had to undergo for taking upon himself the results of bad *karma* of others, and then you will find that your

body and mind are purified. Your grief and misery will pale into insignificance if you will only remember how Sri Rama-krishna, though absolutely pure and of divine origin, suffered for the sake of others and yet did not miss even for a moment his ecstatic joy and blissful contemplation of the Divine Mother.

* * * *

He was the embodiment of bliss itself. All the twentyfour hours of the day were devoted to devotional music, merriment, laughter, teaching and story-

telling. So far as I remember, I never saw him worried for anything.

* * * *

Q. Does the Master really partake of the food that you offer to him ?

A. Yes, he does. A light comes out of his eyes and licks all the articles of food. He eats the food-offering only for the gratification of the devotees. The sacred *prasad* purifies the heart. The mind becomes impure if one eats food without first offering it to God.

* * * *

There is no need of following rituals in offering food to the Master. The *Mantra* one gets from one's Guru is enough for everything.

* * * *

The Master used to advise his devotees to refrain from *Shrāddha* food,* for such food is detrimental to *Bhakti*. With the exception of that you can take any food after offering it to the Lord.

* * * *

The Master will be your protector. You must live de-

* Food offered to the manes.

pending on him. Let him do good to you, if he so desires, or let him drown you if that be his will. But you are to do only what is righteous, and that also according to the power he has given you.

* * * *

It never seemed to me that he had practised the different religions with any definite motive of preaching the harmony of religions. Day and night he remained overwhelmed with the ecstatic thought of God. He enjoyed the sport of the Divine by practising spiritual disci-

plines, following the paths of the Vaishnavas, Christians, Mussalmans and the rest. But it seems to me, my child, that the special feature of the Master's life is his renunciation. Has any one ever seen such a natural renunciation? Renunciation was his ornament.

* * * *

Sri Ramakrishna was a perfect soul. Certainly one can be freed from sin by confessing it to one like him.

* * * *

The Master did not come to destroy anything; he only

came to fulfil.

* * * *

Sri Ramakrishna would tell me, 'One should always be active. One should never be without work. For when one is idle, all sorts of bad thoughts crop up in one's mind.'

* * * *

Q. The Master has said that those who would accept him as their spiritual ideal would not be born again. Again, Swami Vivekananda has said that liberation is not possible without being initiated into *Sannyasa*. What then will be the way out

for the householders ?

A. Yes, what the Master said is true and what Narendra (Swamiji) said is also equally true. The householders have no need of external renunciation. They will spontaneously get the internal renunciation. But some people need external renunciation. Why should you be afraid ? Surrender yourself to the Master and always remember that he stands behind.

* * * *

Our Master did not know much of reading and writing.

The real thing is to have devotion to God. The Master was born on earth to liberate all, the rich and the poor, the learned and the illiterate. The *Malaya* breeze is blowing here. He who will unfurl his sail and take refuge in the Master, will be blessed indeed.

* * * *

The Master has predetermined what is going to accomplish. If anyone surrenders himself totally at his feet, then the Master will see that everything is set right. One must bear with everything.

* * * *

The Master used to say, 'A person may have no relatives anywhere but *Mahamaya* may cause him to keep a cat and thus make him worldly. Such is Her play!'

* * * *

Q. Why do I not see the Master?

A. Continue to pray without losing your heart. Everything will happen in time. For, how many cycles did the *Munis* and the *Ṛishis* of old practise austerities to realise God, and do you believe you will attain to Him in a flash? If not in

this life, you will attain to Him in the next. If not in the next, it will be after that. Is it so easy to realise God? But this time the Master has shown an easy path; therefore it will be possible for all to realise God.

* * * *

Don't worry my child. Our Master alone is *Maheswara* (Supreme God) and *Maheswari* (Supreme Goddess) as well. He alone is the embodiment of all Deities. He alone is the embodiment of all mystic syllables. One can worship through him all Gods and Goddesses.

You can address him as *Maheswara* and *Maheswari.*

* * * *

Does one get faith by mere study of books? Too much reading creates confusion. The Master used to say that one should learn from the scriptures that God alone is real and the world illusory.

SPIRITUAL PRACTICE

SPIRITUAL practice means to keep the mind steady at His lotus feet and to be absorbed in His thoughts.

* * * *

It is essential to perform spiritual practices in a secluded place. When the plant is young, fencing is necessary, but when it grows big, the cattle cannot do any harm, so after some years of meditation when the mind is framed, you can remain anywhere and can mix with any

person and the mind will not be affected.

* * * *

When the desire will arise in the mind to know anything, then pray to Him alone in a lonely place with tears in your eyes. He will remove all dirt and sorrow from your mind and will make you understand everything.

* * * *

Always discriminate. Try to realise that the outside object which is attracting your mind is impermanent, and turn your attention to God.

* * * *

Always try to do Lord's work and at the same time try to practise *Japa* and meditation. If you do such work, mind will not be obsessed with evil thoughts. If you sit alone idly, all sorts of thoughts may come and disturb your mind.

* * * *

You are fortunate, as you have got this human body. Pray to the Lord as much as you can. You must labour hard. It is difficult to attain anything without labour. Some time must be daily set apart for prayer and spiritual practices,

even though one is in the midst of worldly activities.

* * * *

While performing *Japa,* take the name of God with utmost love, sincerity and spirit of self-surrender. Before commencing your meditation daily, first think of your utter helplessness in this world and then slowly begin the practice of *Sadhana* as directed by your Guru.

* * * *

Through the spiritual disciplines the ties of past *Karma* are cut asunder. But the realisation of God cannot be achieved

without ecstatic-love (*Prema-Bhakti*) for Him. Do you know the significance of *Japa* and spiritual practices ? By these the power of the sense-organs are subdued.

* * * *

My child, austerities or worship, practise all these things right now. Will these things be possible later on ? Whatever you want to achieve, achieve it now, this is the right time.

* * * *

Don't relax practice, simply because you do not get his vision. Does an angler catch

a big carp every day, the moment he sits with the rod? He has to wait and wait, and many a time he is disappointed.

* * * *

To pray to God and meditate on Him for even two minutes with full concentration is better than doing so for long hours without that.

* * * *

All perform this or that discipline because they think it their duty to do so. But how many seek God? No doubt you must do your duties. It keeps one's mind in good con-

dition. But it is also very necessary to practise *Japa,* meditation and prayer. One must practise these disciplines at least in the morning and in the evening. Such practice is like the rudder of a boat. When one sits in the evening for prayer, one can discriminate whether he has done good or bad things in the course of the day. Then one should compare the mental state of that day with that of the previous one. Next, while performing *Japa,* one should meditate on one's Chosen Ideal. In meditation

one first sees the face of one's Chosen Deity, but one should try to meditate on the entire body from the feet upward. Unless you practise meditation, side by side with your work, how will you know whether you are doing the desirable or the undesirable thing ?

* * * *

The conjunction of the day and the night is the most auspicious time for calling on God. The mind remains pure at this time.

* * * *

Even in the midst of most

intense activities, one should at least remember God and salute Him. Gradually increase the time of meditation and prayer.

*   *   *   *

The *Mantra* purifies the body. Man becomes pure by repeating the name of God. So repeat His name always.

*   *   *   *

If you do good action, that will counteract your past evil actions. Past sins can be counteracted by meditation, *Japa* and spiritual thought.

*   *   *   *

The moon in the sky is

covered by a cloud. The cloud has to be removed by the wind by degrees ; then only one can see the moon. Does it pass all of a sudden ? The same with spiritual perfection also. The effects of past work are exhausted slowly. When one realises God, He grants knowledge and illumination from within—one knows it oneself.

* * * *

In the fullness of one's spiritual realisation one will find that He who resides in one's heart, resides in the hearts of others as well—the oppress-

ed, the persecuted, the untouchable and the outcast. The realisation makes one truly humble.

* * * *

God is one's very own. The more intensely a person practises spiritual disciplines, the more quickly he attains to God.

* * * *

God has given us fingers that they may be blessed by repeating His name with them.

* * * *

As wind removes the clouds, so the name of God destroys the cloud of worldliness.

MIND

EVERYTHING depends on the mind. Nothing can be achieved without purity of mind. It is said, "The aspirant may have received the grace of the Guru, the Lord and the Vaishnavas; but he comes to grief without the grace of 'one.'" That 'one' is the mind. The mind of the aspirant should be gracious to him.

* * * *

What else does one obtain by the realisation of God? Does

he grow two horns? No, his mind becomes pure, and through a pure mind one attains knowledge and awakening.

* * * *

He who has a pure mind sees everything pure.

* * * *

When a pure mind performs *Japa*, he feels as if the holy name bubbles up spontaneously from within himself. He does not make an effort to repeat the name. One should practise *Japa* and meditation at regular times giving up idleness.

* * * *

The mind is everything. It is in the mind alone that one feels pure and impure. A man, first of all, must make his own mind guilty and then alone he can see another man's guilt.

* * * *

The mind is by nature restless. Therefore at the outset, to make the mind steady, one may practise meditation by regulating the breathing a little. That helps to steady the mind. But one must not overdo it. That heats the brain. You may talk of the vision of God or of meditation, but remember, mind

is everything. One gets everything when the mind becomes steady.

* * * *

Continuous meditation will make the mind so steady that you will not feel to give it up. When the mind is not in a mood to meditate, do not force it to do so. In such conditions get up from the seat of meditation after making prostrations. Real meditation is of a spontaneous nature.

* * * *

Q. Mother, my mind becomes restless now and then.

It craves for enjoyment and that frightens me.

A. Don't be afraid. I tell you that in this *Kali Yuga* mental sin is no sin. Free your mind from all worries on this account. You need not be afraid.

* * * *

My child, this mind is just like a wild elephant. It races with the wind. Therefore one should discriminate all the time. One should work hard for the realisation of God. What a wonderful mind I had at that time! Somebody used to play

on flute at night at Dakshineswar. As I listened to the sound, my mind would be extremely eager for the realisation of God. I thought that the sound was coming directly from God, and I would enter into *Samadhi.*

* * * *

The mind is rendered pure as a result of much austerities. God Who is purity itself cannot be attained without austerities.

* * * *

The mind will be steadied if one repeats the name of God fifteen or twenty thousand times a day. It is truly so. . . I

myself have experienced it. Let them practise it first ; if they fail, let them complain.

* * * *

Repeating the name of God once, when the mind is controlled, is equivalent to a million repetitions when the mind is away from God. You may repeat the name of God for the whole day, but if the mind be elsewhere, that does not produce much result. The repetition of name must be accompanied by concentration.

* * * *

Even if the mind be not con-

centrated, do not give up the repetition of the holy word. You do your duty. While repeating the name, the mind will be fixed of itself like a candle flame in a place protected from wind. It is the wind alone that makes the flame flicker. In the same way, our fancies and desires make our mind restless.

* * * *

As the wind removes the cloud, so the name of the Lord destroys the cloud of worldliness that overcasts the mind.

* * * *

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The mind gets purified after hard *Tapasya* (austerities). Without regular practice nothing can be attained. Both purity and impurity are in the mind. When a man sees defects in others, his mind first gets polluted. What does he gain by finding faults in others ? He hurts himself by that. From my childhood I could not find faults in others. That one thing I have never learnt in life.

* * * *

The mind is no better than a wild elephant. It runs with the wind. Therefore, one

should always discriminate and strive hard for the realisation of God.

* * * *

Do the Master's work and along with that practise spiritual discipline. Some amount of work keeps the mind free from idle thoughts. If one sits alone without any work, various thoughts may come into the mind.

* * * *

Even if you feel no attraction for the Lord, you will succeed by only repeating His name. Whether you jump into water

or are pushed into it, your cloth will get drenched. Will it not ? Meditate every day, since your mind is yet immature. The practice of meditation will make the mind one-pointed. Discriminate always between the real and the unreal. Whenever you find drawn to any object, think of its transitoriness, and try to fix the mind on God.

* * * *

Many take the name of God after receiving blows in life. But he who can offer his mind like a flower at the feet of the

Lord right up from childhood is indeed blessed.

*　　*　　*　　*

The mind naturally tends to evil ; it is disinclined to good deeds. It was my habit to rise early in the morning and meditate. But once I failed to get up so early through indisposition. Such is the natural indolence of the mind that for several days after, I was late in rising. Therefore, you must be up and doing if you want to achieve anything good and great.

*　　*　　*　　*

Q. I cannot concentrate well my mind during meditation. My mind is very fickle and unsteady.

A. Oh, that is nothing—that is the nature of the mind, just like that of the eyes and ears. Do it regularly. *The name of God is more powerful than the senses.* Always think of *Thakur* (Sri Ramakrishna) who is looking after you. Don't be worried about your lapses.

* * * *

I used to pray in the moonlit night, 'O Lord, there is stain even in the moon. Let there be no stain in my mind!'

ADVICE TO WOMEN

YOU see, the only ornament of a woman is her modesty. The flower feels itself most blessed when it is offered at the feet of the divine image. Otherwise it is better for it to wither away on the tree. It pains me very much to see a dandy making a boquet of such flowers and putting it to the nose saying 'Ah, what a nice smell!'

* * * *

Women should not get angry

so easily. They must practise forbearance. In infancy and childhood their parents are their only protection and in youth their husbands. Women are generally very sensitive. A mere word upsets them. And words also are so cheap now-a-days. They should have patience and try to put up with parents or husbands in spite of difficulties.

* * * *

One day a devotee requested the Holy Mother to order her daughter to marry. At this the Holy Mother replied :

"Is it not a misery to remain in lifelong slavery to another and always dance to his tune? Though, there was some risk in being a celibate, still, if one was not inclined to lead a married life, one should not be forced into it and subjected to lifelong worldliness. Those girls, that are drawn to the ideal of complete renunciation, should be encouraged to lead a celibate life."

* * * *

My child, you have been extremely fortunate in getting this human birth. Have intense

devotion to God. One must work hard. How can one achieve anything without effort ? You must devote some time for prayer even in the midst of the busiest hours of the day. I used to be very busy during my days at Dakshineswar ; yet I did my prayer and meditation . . . Let my sister-in-law, who complains of mental worry, do likewise. Let her get up from bed at 3 o'clock in the morning and sit for meditation. Let me see whether she can still have any worry of mind. She will not however

do that, but only talk about her troubles! What is her suffering? I never knew, my child, what mental worry was.

* * * *

The husband, son and the body—all are illusory (*Maya*). These are all shackles of illusion. Unless you can free yourself from them, you will not attain salvation. Even the attachment to the body, the identification of the self with the body, must ultimately go. What is this body my child? It is nothing but three pounds of ashes (after it is burnt). Why

then so much vanity about it? However big the body may be, its culmination is in those three pounds of ashes only. And still people are so attached to it!

* * * *

To a woman who was accusing the Holy Mother for encouraging some one to become a *Sadhu* and saying 'to marry and settle down in life is also a form of religion':

"Look here M—these are all divine children. They will live in the world immaculate like unsmelt flowers. What can be nicer than that? You have

seen for yourself what kind of happiness worldly life can give! What have you learned all these days from me? Why so much attraction for worldly life? Why so much animal propensity? What sort of happiness do you derive from it? Can you not even conceive in dream a pure ideal of life? Can't you live with your husband even now as brother and sister? Why this desire to live a piggish life? This misery of the world has been gnawing into my bones."

* * * *

One day the mother of a monk requested the Holy Mother to ask her son to go back to worldly life. The Holy Mother replied to her, "It is a rare good fortune to be the mother of a monk. People cannot give up attachment even to a brass pot. Is it an easy thing to renounce the world? Why should you worry?"

* * * *

The Holy Mother said to a woman disciple after her initiation:

"Look here my daughter, I do not usually initiate a woman

who has just lost her husband, but I have made a departure in your case, as you have a spiritual temperament. See that I do not have to repent for it. The teacher suffers from the sin committed by the disciple. Always repeat the sacred word with regularity."

* * * *

To a woman who was going to her father-in-law's house:

"Don't be familiar with any body. Don't take much part in the social functions of the family. Say, 'O mind, always keep to yourself.' Don't be in-

quisitive about others! Gradually increase the period of meditation and prayer. . ."

* * * *

The Holy Mother warned another lady disciple as follows:

"Never be intimate with any man—not even with your own father or brother. What to speak of others then. Let me again repeat, don't be intimate with a man, even if God comes to you in that form."

* * * *

To a lady who wanted to adopt a child:

"Never take such a step.

Always do your duty to others, but love you must give to God alone. Worldly love always brings in its wake untold misery."

* * * *

If you love any human being you will have to suffer for it. She is blessed indeed, who can love God alone. There is no suffering in loving God.

BEWARE

I TELL you one thing. If you want peace of mind, do not find fault with others. Rather see your own faults. Learn to make the whole world your own. No one is a stranger, my child, this whole world is your own. When a man sees defects in others, his own mind first gets polluted.

* * * *

A *Sadhu* must be always alert. His path is very slippery, and a slippery path has to be

trodden with exceedingly careful steps. Is it a fun to become a *Sannyasin* ? He must not even look at a woman and when he walks along the street, his eyes should be fixed on his big toes. Just as the collar of a dog saves it from being killed as a street dog, even so does the ochre-robe of a *Sannyasin* saves him from harm.

* * * *

If one lives amidst objects of enjoyment one is naturally overcome by them. Do not cast your eyes even on a wooden representation of a woman or

even go near it.

* * * *

Disciple : 'Mother, no bad ideas come to my mind.'

With a start she stopped him and said,

'Don't say that. One must not say such a thing.'

* * * *

One should not hurt others even by words. One must not speak even an unpleasant truth unnecessarily. By indulging in rude words one's nature becomes rude. One's sensibility is lost if one has not control over one's speech. Sri

Ramakrishna used to say, 'One should not ask a lame person how he became lame.'

* * * *

Whenever you go from a place to another, observe the things around you, and also keep yourself well-informed about what happens in the place where you live. But keep your lips shut.

* * * *

Beware, don't involve yourself in worldliness on the plea of serving your mother.

* * * *

As death is always uncertain,

one should carry out pious intentions whenever the opportunity presents itself, without waiting for a particular time. Death does not make any distinction of time.

* * * *

Give up this dry discussion, this hodge-podge of philosophy. Who has been able to know God by reasoning ?

* * * *

How little intelligence does a man possess ? He may require one thing but he asks for another. He starts to mould an image of Siva and often ends

by making that of a monkey. It is best therefore to surrender all desires at the feet of the Lord. He will do whatever is best for us. But one may pray for devotion and detachment. These cannot be classed as desires.

*   *   *   *

Be careful about these three things : first, a house situated on the bank of a river ; at any time the river may destroy your house and sweep it away in its current. Second, a snake ; you must be careful when you see one, for there is no knowing

when it will come and bite you. Third, a *Sadhu* ; you don't know that one word or one thought of his may injure a householder. Whenever you see a *Sadhu*, you should show him respect. You should not show him disrespect by retorts or slighting remarks.

* * * *

You see, one may commit a fault while serving a great soul. It happens in this way : while he enjoys the privilege of such service, his egotism increases. He then wants to control, like a doll, the person he serves. He

wants to boss over the latter in everything—eating, sitting or rising. He loses the spirit of service. Many great souls surround themselves with riches and splendour. This attracts many to come to them as attendants. Such attendants become intoxicated with the enjoyment of their position and so they pave the way of their own ruin. Tell me, how many there are who can render service in proper spirit!

* * * *

Money always taints the mind. You may think that you

are above money and that you will feel never any attraction for it. You may further think that you may leave it behind at any moment. No, my child, never harbour this thought in your mind. Through a tiny little loop-hole it will enter into your mind and then strangle you gradually quite undetected.

* * * *

Sṛi Ramakrishna could never bear the touch of money. Always remember his words. Money is at the root of all the disaster you see in the world. Money may lure one's mind into other temptations. Beware!

WORDS OF HOPE

DON'T be afraid. Human birth is full of suffering and one has to endure everything patiently by taking the name of God. None, not even God in human form, can escape the suffering of the body and mind. Even *Avataras,* saints and sages have to undergo the ordeal of suffering, for they take upon themselves the burden of the sins of omission and commission of ordinary human beings and thereby sacrifice

themselves for the good of humanity.

* * * *

No one can suffer all the time. No one will spend all his days on the earth in suffering. Every action brings its own result, and gets one's opportunities accordingly.

* * * *

If my child gets covered with mud or dust, is it not my duty to cleanse him and take him in my lap ?

* * * *

But child, don't be worried. These earthly ties are transi-

tory. To-day they seem to be the be-all and end-all of life and to-morrow they vanish. Your real tie is with God.

* * * *

Pray to the Lord to make your heart as pure as the star. As a result of sincere and regular *Japa* and meditation you will find that the Lord will speak to you. All your desires will be fulfilled and you will experience pure bliss.

* * * *

Even the injunctions of destiny are cancelled if one takes refuge in God. Destiny strikes

off with her own hands what she had written about such a person.

* * * *

Difficulties come, but they do not last for ever. You will see that they pass away like water under a bridge.

* * * *

The Master used to say, 'At the time of death I shall have to stand by those who pray to me.' These are the words of his own mouth.

* * * *

Lay the burden of your mind before Sri Ramakrishna. Tell

him your sorrows with your tears. You will find that he will fill up your arms with the desired object.

* * * *

Do you think that even when this body passes away, I can have any release unless everyone of those, whose responsibility I have taken on myself, is out of bondage ? I must constantly live with them. I have taken complete charge of everything, good or bad regarding them. I cannot simply set aside those whom I have accepted as my own.

* * * *

He who is really anxious to cross the ocean of the world, will somehow break his bonds. No one can entangle him.

* * * *

Never fear. He is ever looking after you. Do His work and practise *Sadhana*. A little work daily drives away idle thoughts from the mind.

* * * *

Call on the Lord Who pervades the entire universe. He will shower His blessings upon you.

* * * *

Open your grief-stricken

heart to the Lord. Shed tears and sincerely pray, 'O Lord, draw me towards you, give me peace of mind.' By doing so constantly, you will gradually attain peace of mind.

* * * *

Banaras is permeated with the spirit of God. Any being that dies here—be it a devotee, an atheist, one belonging to another religion, or even an insect or moth—will surely be liberated. Many great sinners who visit Banaras are redeemed of their sins by touching the symbol of Lord Viswanatha.

* * * *

An unmarried person is half-free whether he prays to God or not. He will advance towards God with rapid strides when he feels a little drawn towards Him.

* * * *

God is one's very 'own.' It is the eternal relationship. One realises Him in proportion to the intensity of one's feeling for Him. Don't be afraid. Always remember that somebody is protecting you.

GENERAL INSTRUCTIONS

AS long as a man has desires, there is no end to his transmigration. It is desires that make him take one body after another. There will be rebirth for a man if he has even the desire to eat a piece of candy.

* * * *

The rich should serve God and His devotees with money, and the poor should worship God by repeating His name.

* * * *

One's love of God depends entirely upon one's inner feelings. Love of God is the essential thing.

* * * *

Did the cowherd boys of Vrindaban get Sri Krishna as their own through *Japa* and meditation ? They realised him through ecstatic love.

* * * *

Our essential point is love. It is through love alone that the spiritual family of Sri Ramakrishna has grown and developed.

* * * *

One must have devotion towards one's own Guru. Whatever may be the nature of the Guru, the disciple gets salvation by dint of his unflinching devotion towards his Guru.

* * * *

It is true that He is doing everything, but very few feel like that. Being maddened with pride, people think that they are doing everything and do not depend upon Him. God protects him from all dangers who depends upon Him.

* * * *

You can practise *Pranayama*

a little, but not much, otherwise the brain will get heated. If the mind becomes calm of itself, what is then the necessity to practise *Pranayama?* The practice of *Pranayama* and *Asana* often bring occult powers and occult powers lead one astray.

* * * *

Dreams regarding the Master, are real, but he forbade his disciples to narrate, even to him, dreams regarding himself.

* * * *

It is true that He has become the animals etc., but each is to

suffer according to its past *Samskara* and *Karma*. The Sun is one, but its reflection is different in different places and on different objects.

* * * *

Q. Is it not true that God inspires man to every action ?

A. Yes, it is true. But is man conscious of it ? He thinks in his blind infatuation that he is the doer—he does not rely on God. Whoever surrenders himself to God is saved.

* * * *

Know that the service to your mother is your highest duty.

But it is a different matter if she stands in the way of your spiritual progress.

* * * *

Repeating the name of God a fixed number of times, telling the rosary or counting on fingers is calculated only to direct the mind to God. The natural tendency of the mind is to run this way and that. Through the above means, it is attracted to God.

* * * *

Is not a photograph His shadow ? As you go on praying to Him, He manifests Himself

through that picture.

* * * *

From time immemorial, innumerable people have worshipped images and thereby attained liberation. Does not that count for anything? Sri Ramakrishna never cherished such narrow ideas of differentiation. Brahman exists everywhere.

* * * *

Wherever virtue or vice is discussed, everyone present must take some share at least of that.

* * * *

One should not trifle with a thing, though it may be very insignificant. If you respect a thing, the thing also will respect you. One should perform even an insignificant work with respect.

* * * *

The power of the Guru is transmitted through the *Mantra* to the disciple, that is why the Guru at the time of initiation takes on himself the sins of the disciple and suffers so much from physical maladies. It is extremely difficult to be a Guru for he has to take the respon-

sibility of the disciple's sins.

* * * *

However spiritual a man may be, he must pay the tax for the use of the body to the last farthing.

* * * *

The difference between a great soul and an ordinary man is this : The latter weeps while leaving this body, whereas the former laughs. Death seems to him mere play.

* * * *

Spiritual progress becomes easier if the husband and the wife agree in their views re-

garding spiritual practices.

* * * *

First offer to God whatever you eat. One must not eat unoffered food. As your food is, so will be your blood. From pure food, you get pure blood, pure mind and strength. Pure minds beget ecstatic love (*Prema-Bhakti*).

* * * *

God alone is true. Everything else is false.

* * * *

The goal of life is to realise God and to be always immersed in His thought.

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